

the back; the rest of the wing-coverts and quills dusky brown, edged with grey; tail-feathers blackish, with grey margins; crown of head a little more dusky grey than the back, especially on the forehead, lores, cheeks, and throat, the two latter being blackish; below the eye a white spot; ear-coverts slaty grey, surmounted by a broad white eyebrow, the white extending a little behind the ear-coverts on the sides of the neck; lower throat, fore neck, and chest blue-grey; breast and remainder of under surface of body bright cinnamon-rufous, including the under tail-coverts; thighs grey; under wing-coverts blue-grey, washed with cinnamon; quills dusky, ashy along the inner web: "bill and legs slaty blue; iris black" (*C. M. Woodford*). Total length 6·3 inches, culmen 0·65, wing 3·1, tail 2·45, tarsus 0·7.

Adult female. Like the male, but entirely grey on the head and neck, and without black on the cheeks or throat; no white on the eyebrow or sides of neck: "bill and legs slaty blue; iris black" (*C. M. W.*). Total length 6 inches, culmen 0·65, wing 3·0, tail 3·45, tarsus 0·7.

Young male. Similar to the female, but with a little black on the head and face, and some white round the eye.

Hab. Island of Rubiana, Solomon Archipelago.

This new species bears at first sight some resemblance to *Monarcha inornata* in the colour of the abdomen and the grey upper surface, but the close-set plumage of the forehead and the white eyebrow serve to distinguish *P. florenciæ*, the former character placing it in the genus *Piezorhynchus*. Here its nearest ally is *P. richardsi*, but it is grey instead of black, and has only a white eyebrow instead of a white hinder crown.

XX.—On the Young of Pallas's Sand-Grouse (*Syrnhaptes paradoxus*). By ALFRED NEWTON.

(Plate VII.)

PENDING the publication of Dr. Rudolf Blasius's promised report, which I trust will enable me to discharge the duty,

laid upon me by the Editor of 'The Ibis,' of telling, from the beginning, in its pages the story of the latest irruption of *Syrnhaptes* into Europe, I think it advisable to give the readers of this Journal the particulars of one of the most gratifying results of that remarkable event. This seems the more necessary since the main fact was announced by me at the last meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, held at Newcastle-upon-Tyne in September 1889, when I had the pleasure of exhibiting to those present a specimen of the chick of *Syrnhaptes paradoxus*—the first, so far as I know, that had ever been brought to the notice of any body of naturalists, and, moreover, one that had been hatched in a free state in this island.

The readers of Mr. H. A. Macpherson's interesting little pamphlet* will be aware that in 1888 Major Chadwick informed Mr. Harvie-Brown that the gamekeeper of the former, with the aid of a spaniel-dog, about the end of June in that year, discovered some newly hatched Sand-Grouse on the sand-hills of Moray, which at the time were frequented by companies of from two to three hundred birds of this species. By the kindness of those gentlemen I was placed in communication with this gamekeeper, by name Alexander Scott, who in answer to my enquiries favoured me with an account so satisfactory that I had no hesitation in accepting it. Though extracts from his letters to me have been already printed by Mr. Macpherson, it seems due to the observer that all his information should be here inserted. Writing to me on the 16th of February, 1889, Scott stated:—

"About the Sand-Grouse, I may mention that one day last summer, the latter end of June, in going my rounds I started a pair of Sand-Grouse, which allowed me to get within about ten yards of them. I was surprised to see they only flew about forty yards. I went to where they got up and examined the place, when I first got one young and then another, about ten yards apart.

* The Visitation of Pallas's Sand-Grouse to Scotland in 1888. By Rev. H. A. Macpherson, M.A. London: 1889 (Porter, Princes Street, Cavendish Square).

"I had them in my hands, and having seen the old birds several times, as well as having them dead in my possession, and knowing the peculiar foot they have got, I at once examined the young ones' feet, and found the three small toes, with the pad underneath the small foot, so that I could not be deceived. I have not the slightest doubt but that they were the young of the Sand-Grouse. I may mention that I do not think they came to maturity, as I have often seen the old birds without the young; but that I cannot be sure about, as I did not want to disturb them but as little as possible. I should also have mentioned that, as far as I could judge, the birds would be about three or four days old when I found them. You may make any use of this, as I have given a true report of what I have seen."

Again, in a letter to me, dated the 25th of the same month, he added:—

"The young Sand-Grouse, when I saw them first, were crouching close to the ground,—were it not for a dog I had with me, I might not have seen them. After I had them in my hand and put them down, they crouched again close to the ground. I did not look if there were any more of the brood, as I was afraid I might tread on them.

"The nature of the ground where they were found was sand, with tufts of bent or long rough grass growing on it, the same as generally grows on sand near the seaside."

On my making these statements known to Mr. Macpherson, he lost no time in going to Moray and in seeing Scott, of whom he writes (*op. cit.* p. 27):—"We put him through a cross-examination, with the result that he fully confirmed his oral and written statements previously received."

Satisfied as I was in my own mind as to the truth of the evidence just adduced, I could not but regret that no professed ornithologist should have seen so interesting an object as the young *Syrrhaptes*, and I feared that a grand opportunity, never to occur again, had been lost. However, about noon on the 9th of August, 1889, there was delivered to me a small box, marked outside "Live Bird." Accustomed as I am to receive unexpected consignments of this kind, I of

course proceeded to shut the windows before I opened the package, lest the captive should escape. My precaution in this case was needless. I found the poor prisoner had been already liberated by death; but I leave my readers to judge of my feelings when, instead of the pied Sparrow or something just as valuable, which long experience has taught me to regard as the ordinary occupant of boxes similarly delivered, I found that for which I was wholly unprepared. As I carefully raised the lid there was before me the down-clad chick of what might, so far as the first glance went, be a Tern, a Plover, or a Sandpiper. But as I lifted it from its scanty bed of dry grass the next moment revealed to me

—"the feet of the Queen of the yellow sands,"

and I was certain that I had in my hand a young *Syrnhaptes*!

The following is a description which I immediately drew up:—

Weight a little more than $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. Length, in a prone position, from tip of bill to coccyx 3·3 in.; tibia ·86; tarsus to tip of middle claw ·9; carpal joint to tip of longest digit ·68; nostril to tip of bill ·22; anterior canthus to tip of bill ·46. Outer toe united to middle toe to within ·05 of tip, inner united to middle to within ·1 of tip. No trace of hind toe.

Bill blackish-grey, paling into dusky horn-colour towards the tip, no trace of armature on culmen, mandible rather more livid. Bare skin round eyes dusky bluish-grey. Irides dull hazel. Soles pale ochre; claws dusky white.

Downy plumage. Immediately above each nostril is a cream-coloured V pointing forwards, succeeded by a rich brown triangle, also pointing forwards, with a black terminal margin produced backwards to bound on each side a cream-coloured mesial stripe. Behind these triangles a cream-coloured patch reaching to anterior canthus and succeeded by a rich brown L-shaped patch, extending from the eyebrow to the black boundary line of the mesial stripe. This patch, barred with black, on tips of down, is invaded by one arm of a cream-coloured patch, the general tendency of which is to gird the hind head like a coronet, but runs forwards in the midst to meet the mesial stripe, while the lateral patch of rich brown, interrupted on the top of the head by irregular cream-coloured frecklings, is produced backward and becomes paler, though still mottled with

black. Immediately beneath the eye is a curved brown patch, streaked with black, then a large cream-coloured space, running backward to join the coronet, bearing a quadrangular brown patch beneath the mandible and in a line with the eye, and another directly below the ear. The chin is more tinged with buff, and this colour extends all over the front and lower parts of the body and legs to the claws. Along the ridge of the neck is a light brown streak tinged with sienna, which, edged on either side by a light sienna streak, is continuous along the back till just above the lumbar region, where these streaks unite and form a conspicuous stripe that extends to the coccyx, being bordered on each side by a streak of very deep brown—almost black—slightly mottled with sienna. The upper part of the back and wings is mottled sienna and dark brown, with irregular lines or patches of cream-colour, one of which forms a crescent on the upper part of the humerus, while another is very distinct just below the edge of the forearm. The lumbar region shews two distinct pairs of cream-coloured patches, one extending over the articulation of the femur, the other further back. The flanks are covered with tufts of down of the same cream-colour, sienna, and rich brown, the first perhaps predominating so as to form a line parallel to the axis of the femur.

The forehead and chin are beset with long hairs, black on the former, but on the latter dusky at the base of the bill, and afterwards cream-coloured—the last are continued over all the throat and breast.

I had hardly finished the above description when a letter from Major Chadwick reached me by post. It was dated the 8th of August (the preceding day), and informed me that, knowing how anxious I had been the year before to see the young of *Syrrhaptēs*, he had sent me the example just described, “found at Binsness to-day.” I must apologize to that gentleman for disobeying his command, which was to return it to him as soon as I had looked at it, that he might have it stuffed; but I telegraphed and wrote to him that it was absolutely necessary for me to have its portrait taken before I could send it back, and accordingly, having in the meanwhile ascertained by telegraph that Mr. Frohawk was at home and willing to depict it, I forwarded it the same night to him, whereby he was able to execute, within forty-

eight hours of the bird's death, the very successful drawings which he has since transferred to stone in illustration of this paper (Plate VII.). Subsequently the bird was sent to Mr. Cullingford, of the Museum of the University of Durham, by whom it was preserved with his accustomed skill, and was exhibited by me at the meeting of the British Association as before mentioned. If my readers will take the trouble to compare Mr. Frohawk's figures with my description they will, I think, admit that the discrepancies are only those of a kind which can hardly fail to occur when a specimen is viewed by different eyes. I must add, however, that the bird being dead, the *expression* given to it in the side view of its head is, of course, imaginary—there being nothing to guide him or me as to the truth in this matter. I never saw the living chick of a Sand-Grouse, and the only representation of one with which I am acquainted is that of *Pterocles alchata* in the 'Proceedings of the Zoological Society' for 1866 (pl. ix. fig. 2), while I am not sure whether that was drawn from the living bird or not. The general resemblance in pattern of the clothing of the two will be manifest; but it is easy to observe individual differences—such, for instance, as the apparently more hooped form of the white markings on the body of *Pterocles* and the absence of the two lateral white lines on the head of *Syrrhaptes*.

An additional reason for my satisfaction at being able to give a description and figures of this little bird is that thereby may be set at rest several reports which have been current on the Continent to the effect that the young of *Syrrhaptes* had, on more than one occasion and in more than one country, been found, and that they were covered with black down. When I first heard of these reports I suspected that the young of *Crex pratensis* or of some other Ralline form had been mistaken for that of *Syrrhaptes*, and I now feel sure that it was so.

It remains to mention the circumstances under which the example sent to me by Major Chadwick was obtained. That gentleman, to whose kindness I am so much indebted, was good enough to answer my enquiries as follows:—

“When I returned from Norway at the end of July, I asked what had been seen at Binsness, and the keeper told me that some Sand-Grouse had appeared again, and that he had lately seen two birds fly from the water across a wood to the sandhills. So, a day or two after, I went a walk round, and at last I saw two Sand-Grouse get up together. They flew only about fifty yards, so I waited nearly an hour to try and find out where they would go to; but it was no use as they, being shy birds, had seen me. The next day I stalked them, and got to the back of a hillock close to them, where I saw them feeding on the ground. Being nearly in the same place I concluded that they must have eggs and young. I had no dog with me, so I did not try to look. Next day the keeper and I went to the same place and put the birds up. Then we began to search, and at last the dog found close to us the young one I sent to you. They are very difficult to find. We did not look for any more, as I did not wish to take any more or to disturb the birds; but I have no doubt there were two more. You are quite welcome to exhibit the bird, as I dare say not many have been seen. I fancy it is the same pair that bred here last year, as it was close to the same place.”

I subsequently learned that Major Chadwick was accompanied on this occasion by the very man and dog who found the young birds in 1888.

Mr. Cullingford, after skinning the specimen, obligingly sent me its body, and I forwarded the contents of its crop to Mr. Robert Service of Maxwelltown, who was so good as to inform me that, young as the bird was, he found it to contain 45 seeds, three of which were those of Rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*), one of Tufted Hair-grass (*Aira cæspitosa*), and one of Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*)—which last I had myself seen. Though he was careful to sow all these seeds without delay, only three of them germinated, namely, two of *Poa annua* and one of *Polygonum persicaria*, the vitality of the rest having apparently been destroyed by the spirit in which they had, though only for a few hours, been immersed; but it is possible that some were unripe.

The fact of this paradoxical species having newly-hatched young—for I cannot suppose the bird sent to me could have been more than two or three days old—so late in the season as the 8th of August seems to be especially remarkable.

Magdalene College, Cambridge,
19 January, 1890.

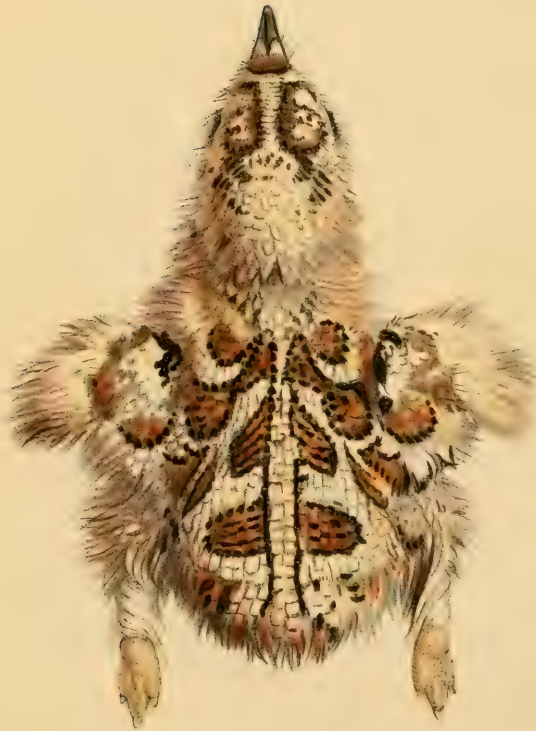
XXI.—*On the Columbine Genus Macropygia and its Allies.*

By Major R. G. WARDLAW RAMSAY, F.L.S., F.Z.S., &c.

THE genus *Macropygia* is one about which but little has been written. It is at first sight a perplexing group, and this fact, perhaps, has prevented many ornithologists from even attempting to identify the specimens which they may have happened to find in local collections. Such are the variations in plumage in this genus, and so closely allied are many of the species, that it is only by an examination of a large series that satisfactory conclusions can be arrived at.

•The only systematic treatment which this genus has received is that of Count T. Salvadori (Orn. Pap. vol. iii. p. 132), and perhaps may be added that of Professor Schlegel (Mus. d. Pays-Bas, Columbæ).

With a view to secure sufficient materials for a revision of this group, I have endeavoured to collect as large a number of specimens as possible; and I here take the opportunity of acknowledging the kindness and courtesy of Dr. A. B. Meyer for the loan of specimens from the Dresden Museum, of Dr. Gestro, to whom I was introduced by Count Salvadori, for an interesting series from the Museum at Genoa, and, lastly, of Canon Tristram for placing his specimens at my disposal. These examples, together with the already large series in the National Museum, augmented, as it has been of late years, by the collections of the late Marquis of Tweeddale, and Messrs. Hume, Salvin and Godman, and Seebohm, have given me an opportunity such as has not been previously enjoyed by anyone for working out the genus.



Drawn by J. A. Rehn.

Hand-colored by J. A. Rehn.

SYRRHAPTES PARADOXUS, *pallens*